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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

MICHAEL HARRIS,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GENE W SCHWAB D/B/A GENE'S  
LAWN EQUIPMENT; and DOES 1 to 10,  
Defendants.

**Case No.:**

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE  
RELIEF AND DAMAGES FOR DENIAL  
OF CIVIL RIGHTS OF A DISABLED  
PERSON IN VIOLATIONS OF

1. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES  
ACT, 42 U.S.C. §12131 et seq.;

2. CALIFORNIA'S UNRUH CIVIL  
RIGHTS ACT;

3. CALIFORNIA'S DISABLED  
PERSONS ACT;

4. CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY  
CODE;

5. NEGLIGENCE

Plaintiff MICHAEL HARRIS ("Plaintiff") complains of Defendants GENE W  
SCHWAB D/B/A GENE'S LAWN EQUIPMENT; and DOES 1 to 10 ("Defendants")  
and alleges as follows:

**PARTIES**

1. Plaintiff is a California resident with a physical disability. Plaintiff suffers  
from hemiplegia and hemiparesis and is substantially limited in his ability to walk.  
Plaintiff requires the use of a wheelchair at all times when traveling in public.



1           9.     Venue is proper in this court pursuant to 28 USC §1391(b). Defendants  
2 reside in this district, San Bernardino County, California.

3                                   **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

4           10.    In or about February of 2025, Plaintiff went to the Business.

5           11.    The Business is a lawn equipment store business establishment, open to the  
6 public, and is a place of public accommodation that affects commerce through its  
7 operation.

8           12.    While attempting to enter the Business during each visit, Plaintiff personally  
9 encountered a number of barriers that interfered with his ability to use and enjoy the  
10 goods, services, privileges, and accommodations offered at the Business.

11          13.    To the extent of Plaintiff's personal knowledge, the barriers at the Business  
12 included, but were not limited to, the following:

- 13                   a.     Defendants failed to maintain accessibility for persons with  
14                            disabilities to comply with the federal and state standards. Defendants  
15                            failed to provide at least one accessible entrance as required as the  
16                            entrance had a step instead of a proper ramp.

17          14.    These barriers and conditions denied Plaintiff the full and equal access to the  
18 Business and caused Plaintiff difficulty and frustration. Plaintiff wishes to return and  
19 patronize the Business; however, Plaintiff is deterred from visiting the Business because  
20 his knowledge of these violations prevents him from returning until the barriers are  
21 removed.

22          15.    Based on the violations, Plaintiff alleges, on information and belief, that  
23 there are additional barriers to accessibility at the Business after further site inspection.  
24 Plaintiff seeks to have all barriers related to his disability remedied. *See Doran v. 7-*  
25 *Eleven, Inc.* 524 F.3d 1034 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2008).

26          16.    In addition, Plaintiff alleges, on information and belief, that Defendants  
27 knew that particular barriers render the Business inaccessible, violate state and federal  
28 law, and interfere with access for the physically disabled.

17. At all relevant times, Defendants had and still have control and dominion over the conditions at this location and had and still have the financial resources to remove these barriers without much difficulty or expenses to make the Business accessible to the physically disabled in compliance with ADDAG and Title 24 regulations. Defendants have not removed such barriers and have not modified the Business to conform to accessibility regulations.

### **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

#### **VIOLATION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990**

18. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior paragraphs in this complaint.

19. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), no individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases, or leases to, or operates a place of public accommodation. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a).

20. Discrimination, *inter alia*, includes:

- a. A failure to make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations to individuals with disabilities, unless the entity can demonstrate that making such modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(ii).
- b. A failure to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services, unless the entity can demonstrate that taking such steps would fundamentally alter the

1 nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or  
 2 accommodation being offered or would result in an undue burden. 42  
 3 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iii).

4 c. A failure to remove architectural barriers, and communication barriers  
 5 that are structural in nature, in existing facilities, and transportation  
 6 barriers in existing vehicles and rail passenger cars used by an  
 7 establishment for transporting individuals (not including barriers that  
 8 can only be removed through the retrofitting of vehicles or rail  
 9 passenger cars by the installation of a hydraulic or other lift), where  
 10 such removal is readily achievable. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv).

11 d. A failure to make alterations in such a manner that, to the maximum  
 12 extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are readily  
 13 accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including  
 14 individuals who use wheelchairs or to ensure that, to the maximum  
 15 extent feasible, the path of travel to the altered area and the  
 16 bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered  
 17 area, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with  
 18 disabilities where such alterations to the path or travel or the  
 19 bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered area  
 20 are not disproportionate to the overall alterations in terms of cost and  
 21 scope. 42 U.S.C. § 12183(a)(2).

22 21. At least one accessible route shall connect accessible building, facilities,  
 23 elements, and spaces that are on the same site. 1991 ADA Standards § 4.3.2. A public  
 24 accommodation shall maintain in operable working condition those features of facilities  
 25 and equipment that are required to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with  
 26 disabilities by the Act or this part. 28 C.F.R. 35.211(a).

27 22. Here, Defendants failed to provide at least one accessible entrance to the  
 28 Business as the entrance had a step instead of a proper ramp.

1           23. A public accommodation shall maintain in operable working condition those  
2 features of facilities and equipment that are required to be readily accessible to and usable  
3 by persons with disabilities by the Act or this part. 28 C.F.R. 35.211(a).

4           24. By failing to maintain the facility to be readily accessible and usable by  
5 Plaintiff, Defendants are in violation of Plaintiff's rights under the ADA and its related  
6 regulations.

7           25. The Business has denied and continues to deny full and equal access to  
8 Plaintiff and to other people with disabilities. Plaintiff has been and will continue to be  
9 discriminated against due to the lack of accessible facilities, and therefore, seeks  
10 injunctive relief to alter facilities to make such facilities readily accessible to and usable  
11 by individuals with disabilities.

## 12                                   **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

### 13                           **VIOLATION OF THE UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**

14           26. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior  
15 paragraphs in this complaint.

16           27. California Civil Code § 51 states, "All persons within the jurisdiction of this  
17 state are free and equal, and no matter what their sex, race, color, religion, ancestry,  
18 national origin, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sexual  
19 orientation, citizenship, primary language, or immigration status are entitled to the full  
20 and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business  
21 establishments of every kind whatsoever."

22           28. California Civil Code § 52 states, "Whoever denies, aids or incites a denial,  
23 or make any discrimination or distinction contrary to Section 51, 51.5, or 51.6, is liable  
24 for each and every offense for the actual damages, and any amount that may be  
25 determined by a jury, or a court sitting without a jury, up to a maximum of three times the  
26 amount of actual damage but in no case less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000) and any  
27 attorney's fees that may be determined by the court in addition thereto, suffered by any  
28 person denied the rights provided in Section 51, 51.5, or 51.6.

1           29. California Civil Code § 51(f) specifies, “a violation of the right of any  
2 individual under federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336)  
3 shall also constitute a violation of this section.”

4           30. The actions and omissions of Defendants alleged herein constitute a denial  
5 of full and equal accommodation, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services by  
6 physically disabled persons within the meaning of California Civil Code §§ 51 and 52.  
7 Defendants have discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of California Civil Code §§  
8 51 and 52.

9           31. The violations of the Unruh Civil Rights Act caused Plaintiff to experience  
10 difficulty, discomfort, or embarrassment. The Defendants are also liable for statutory  
11 damages as specified in California Civil Code §55.56(a)-(c).

### 12                                   **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

#### 13                           **VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA DISABLED PERSONS ACT**

14           32. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior  
15 paragraphs in this complaint.

16           33. California Civil Code § 54.1(a) states, “Individuals with disabilities shall be  
17 entitled to full and equal access, as other members of the general public, to  
18 accommodations, advantages, facilities, medical facilities, including hospitals, clinics,  
19 and physicians’ offices, and privileges of all common carriers, airplanes, motor vehicles,  
20 railroad trains, motorbuses, streetcars, boats, or any other public conveyances or modes  
21 of transportation (whether private, public, franchised, licensed, contracted, or otherwise  
22 provided), telephone facilities, adoption agencies, private schools, hotels, loading places,  
23 places of public accommodations, amusement, or resort, and other places in which the  
24 general public is invited, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by  
25 law, or state or federal regulation, and applicable alike to all persons.

26           34. California Civil Code § 54.3(a) states, “Any person or persons, firm or  
27 corporation who denies or interferes with admittance to or enjoyment of public facilities  
28 as specified in Sections 54 and 54.1 or otherwise interferes with the rights of an



individual with a disability under Sections 54, 54.1 and 54.2 is liable for each offense for the actual damages, and any amount as may be determined by a jury, or a court sitting without a jury, up to a maximum of three times the amount of actual damages but in no case less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) and any attorney's fees that may be determined by the court in addition thereto, suffered by any person denied the rights provided in Section 54, 54.1, and 54.2.

35. California Civil Code § 54(d) specifies, "a violation of the right of an individual under Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) also constitute a violation of this section, and nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the access of any person in violation of that act.

36. The actions and omissions of Defendants alleged herein constitute a denial of full and equal accommodation, advantages, and facilities by physically disabled persons within the meaning of California Civil Code § 54. Defendants have discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of California Civil Code § 54.

37. The violations of the California Disabled Persons Act caused Plaintiff to experience difficulty, discomfort, and embarrassment. The Defendants are also liable for statutory damages as specified in California Civil Code §55.56(a)-(c).

#### **FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

##### **CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 19955, et seq.**

38. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior paragraphs in this complaint.

39. Plaintiff and other similar physically disabled persons who require the use of a wheelchair are unable to use public facilities on a "full and equal" basis unless each such facility is in compliance with the provisions of California Health & Safety Code § 19955 et seq. Plaintiff is a member of the public whose rights are protected by the provisions of California Health & Safety Code § 19955 et seq.

40. The purpose of California Health & Safety Code § 1995 et seq. is to ensure that public accommodations or facilities constructed in this state with private funds



1 adhere to the provisions of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 4450) of Division 5 of  
2 Title 1 of the Government Code. The code relating to such public accommodations also  
3 require that “when sanitary facilities are made available for the public, clients, or  
4 employees in these stations, centers, or buildings, they shall be made available for  
5 persons with disabilities.

6 41. Title II of the ADA holds as a “general rule” that no individual shall be  
7 discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of goods  
8 (or use), services, facilities, privileges, and accommodations offered by any person who  
9 owns, operates, or leases a place of public accommodation. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a).  
10 Further, each and every violation of the ADA also constitutes a separate and distinct  
11 violation of California Civil Code §§ 54(c) and 54.1(d), thus independently justifying an  
12 award of damages and injunctive relief pursuant to California law, including but not  
13 limited to Civil Code § 54.3 and Business and Professions Code § 17200, et seq.

#### 14 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

##### 15 **NEGLIGENCE**

16 42. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior  
17 paragraphs in this complaint.

18 43. Defendants have a general duty and a duty under the ADA, Unruh Civil  
19 Rights Act and California Disabled Persons Act to provide safe and accessible facilities  
20 to the Plaintiff.

21 44. Defendants breached their duty of care by violating the provisions of ADA,  
22 Unruh Civil Rights Act and California Disabled Persons Act.

23 45. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants’ negligent conduct, Plaintiff  
24 has suffered damages.

#### 25 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

26 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays for relief and judgment against  
27 Defendants as follows:  
28

1           1.     For preliminary and permanent injunction directing Defendants to comply  
2 with the Americans with Disability Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act;

3           2.     Award of all appropriate damages, including but not limited to statutory  
4 damages, general damages and treble damages in amounts, according to proof;

5           3.     Award of all reasonable restitution for Defendants' unfair competition  
6 practices;

7           4.     Reasonable attorney's fees, litigation expenses, and costs of suit in this  
8 action;

9           5.     Prejudgment interest pursuant to California Civil Code § 3291; and

10          6.     Such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

11                               **DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY**

12          Pursuant to Rule 38(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Plaintiff hereby  
13 demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

14  
15 Dated: May 2, 2025

SO. CAL. EQUAL ACCESS GROUP

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18 By: /s/ Jason J. Kim  
19 Jason J. Kim, Esq.  
20 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
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